

Maine

Nature-Based Tourism



MAINE TOURISM FACTS

A Reference Guide to the Impact of Tourism on the State of Maine

Tourism - An Integral Part of Maine's Economy

Maine people work for tourism and tourism works for Maine people...

In 2004, **domestic visitors** to Maine directly and indirectly generated:

- *\$13.6 billion in sales of goods and services;*
- *176,600 jobs; and*
- *\$3.8 billion in total payroll*

Out-of-state domestic visitors made up 72% of *all travel expenditures* in 2004.

Keeping revenues up - - - and taxes down...

In 2004, revenues from domestic tourism totaled *\$531 million in state and local taxes*, including:

- *\$294 million in Sales Tax;*
- *\$149 million in Personal Income Tax and*
- *\$88 million in Gasoline Tax*

Maine Domestic Travel Profile...

An estimated *8.9 million overnight trips* were taken to Maine in 2004.

An estimated *34.7 million day trips* were taken to Maine in 2004.

Travel during *July, August & September* accounts for *52% of overnight tourist trips* to Maine.

Travel during *April, May & June* accounts for *25% of overnight tourist trips* to Maine.

Travel during *October, November & December* accounts for *16% of overnight tourist trips* to Maine.

Travel during *January, February & March* accounts for *8% of overnight tourist trips* to Maine.

The Maine Experience...

Overnight visitors come to Maine to:

- *tour* the state – **32%**
- enjoy Maine's superb *outdoors* – **20%**
- take a *beach* vacation – **14%**
- attend a *special event* – **11%**

Tourism keeps *Maine: The Way Life Should Be* by...

Keeping our historical and cultural sites vibrant and alive.

Contributing to the conservation, protection, preservation and maintenance of our natural wonders.

Providing educational opportunities for our children.

Creating cultural and recreational opportunities for Maine residents.
Contributing millions to Maine's General Fund to support education, social and natural resource programs.

- Why do Americans travel overnight?

Nationally:

42% - Marketable Pleasure Trips

41% - Visit Friends & Relatives

17% - Business

Maine:

62% - Marketable Pleasure Trips

29% - Visit Friends & Relatives

9% - Business

- What does the tourist want?

Nationally:

18% - Touring

13% - Outdoor Recreation

12% - Beach

17% - Special Events

What brings tourists to Maine?

34% - Touring

21% - Outdoor Recreation

12% - Beach

10% - Special Events

- What information are our tourists requesting before making travel plans?

Top 15 Inquiries:

1. Sightseeing
2. Scenic Byways
3. Beaches
4. Whale Watching
5. Shopping
6. Day Hiking
7. Museums/Theaters
8. Bed & Breakfast
9. Romantic Getaways
10. Fairs
11. Wildlife Photography
12. Camps & Cottages
13. Antiquing
14. Camping
15. Guided Trips

- 2005 has been the best overnight travel market since 2000

Marketable Pleasure Trips

Nationally - +2% Maine - +12%

Visit Friends & Relatives

Nationally - +7% Maine - +11%

Business

Nationally - +1% Maine - -13%

Longwoods 2005 Visitor Study

FERMATA, Inc.
Executive Summary
Strategic Plan for Implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative
September 2005

Background

The nature-based tourism discussion in the state of Maine was prompted by issues raised at the November 2003 Blaine House Conference on Maine's Natural Resource-based Industries. In September 2004, the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) retained FERMATA, Inc., a nationally-known experiential tourism development consulting firm, to assess Maine's opportunities in nature-based tourism; one of the fastest growing niches in the travel industry. Governor John Baldacci has provided leadership for the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative throughout the entire project.

FERMATA, Inc. worked with state agency representatives, members of various state level organizations with interests in tourism and natural resources, and stakeholders in three rural pilot project areas: the Western Mountains, the Highlands, and Downeast.

Project Goals

1. Demonstrate how nature-based tourism development can be planned and implemented across the entire state.
2. Establish the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative as one of the administration's key strategies for rural economic development through job creation and tax revenue generation.
3. Provide a framework to support and compliment local and regional experiential tourism development efforts.
4. Furnish Maine visitors with accurate and comprehensive information on opportunities to experience the state's unique natural, historical, and cultural resources.

Vision

Experiential tourism enables rural communities to take advantage of their region's heritage, culture, and natural resources in new ways while also supporting traditional resource-based activities. It also enhances and diversifies traditional natural resource-based industries. Given the array of marketable travel and recreational experiences available throughout the Maine Woods, efforts to support experiential tourism service providers should result in net new dollars coming in to support rural, local economies. Coordination and implementation of the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative actions is expected to be led largely by local coalitions of tourism promotion agencies and other stakeholders with support and local capacity development assistance from appropriate state agencies and others as needed.

VISITOR PROFILE

Experiential Tourism: An Evolving Sector

At once recreational and educational, experiential tourism revolves around venues and activities that allow tourists to be active participants in (rather than only passive beneficiaries of) their travel experiences. Experiential tourism relies on *in situ* natural, cultural, and historical resources, and helps people learn not only about the world around them but about themselves as well. It includes activities that draw people outdoors such as birding and other wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, learning about the history of a region, and nature photography, in addition to other cultural, historical, or nature-based activities.

While individual travel interests may differ, experiential tourists are all bound together by the shared goal of engaging in activities from which they can develop a deeper understanding of a region, its unique natural attributes, and its local history and culture.

In recent years, a variety of tourism market studies have documented the traveling public's increasing desire for experiences that allow them to learn first-hand the lifestyle, culture, and history of rural areas. For example, according to the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), 48% of U.S. travelers are interested in visiting a place that is "remote and untouched." Moreover, 57% are attracted by an area's "culture," and 76% of U.S. travelers state that they "would like to visit someplace they have never visited before" (TIA 2002).

TIA research also shows that cultural and historic tourists, as well as tourists whose main purpose is to learn about new places, constitute a significant portion of the American travel market. For example, recent TIA studies demonstrate that 81 percent of U.S. adults who traveled in the past year, or 118 million tourists, are considered historical/cultural travelers. These travelers included historical or cultural activities on almost 217 million person-trips last year, up 13 percent from 192 million in 1996. At the same time, 30.2 million adults have taken an educational trip in the past three years, and 18% of travelers in the past year said that taking such a trip was the main purpose of their travel (TIA 2003).

What Experiential Tourists Do

Numerous market segments or niches come under the experiential tourism umbrella, many of which are among those most rapidly expanding within the general tourism market. For example, wildlife-associated recreation, as opposed to outdoor recreation in general, now involves millions of Americans in hunting, fishing and a variety of non-consumptive activities such as birding, bird feeding, and wildlife photography.

In 2000, the National Survey of Recreation and the Environment compiled data indicating that in the previous year "an estimated 129 million people took the time to stop and observe the natural scenery around them and an estimated 96 million people also took the time to view wildlife or wildflowers, while 71.2 million people viewed birds." In

2004, these numbers rose to 151 million people viewing natural scenery, 125 million viewing or photographing wildlife, and 122 million viewing/photographing wildflowers.

Moreover, Fermata's own research indicates that experiential tourists look for five primary opportunities when choosing a destination: to enjoy the sights, smells, and sounds of nature; to be outdoors; to see wildlife species not seen before; to get away from the demands of everyday life; and for family recreation (Eubanks, Ditton & Stoll, 2000).

In addition to the sights and sounds of nature, the TIA report, *Geotourism: The New Trend in Travel* (2003), points out that "authenticity is a primary theme when examining travelers wants and needs". Four in ten (41%) travelers say their experience is better when they can see and do something authentic (as opposed to those travel experiences that are constructed). In addition, half of all travelers prefer to experience the local culture (49%) and support local businesses (49%) at their destinations. Finally, the TIA also reports that, in general terms, enrichment, health/revitalization/enhancement, and eco-tourism/soft adventure are among the tourism areas most likely to grow in the U.S. market (TIA 1998).

FERMATA, Inc.

Strategic Plan for Implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative

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• Who is the experiential, nature-based tourist?

Age:	52.1 Years
Gender:	48.2% Male, 51.7 Female
Education:	16.36 Years
Income:	\$61,962
Origin:	28.9 urban, 47.6% suburban

Note: Fermata Summary and Full Reports are available at eh DECD Website
- www.econdevmaine.com/resources/default.asp